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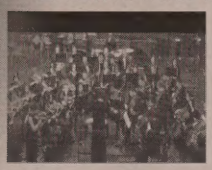
The Musket

LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL'S STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1969



Fall Concerts
LHS orchestras, Honors Choirs and Concert Band make their autumnal debut this October and November.
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Winter Athlete Profiles
Varsity athletes Leah Strohmeyer, Louisa Bachman and Stephen Willis discuss dedication and passion for winter sports.
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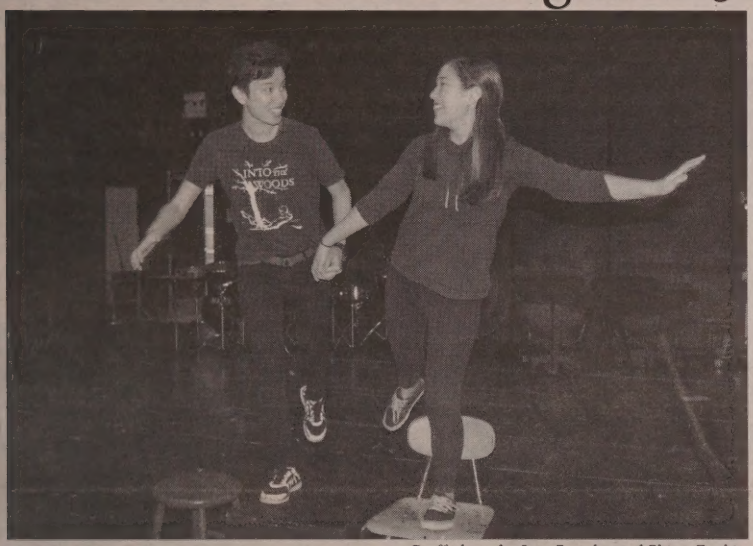
Peter Pan remake coming Nov. 19



Staff photo by Izzy Rourke and Shira Garbis
Katrina Chaput (left) and Karina Wen play Peter Pan and Wendy, respectively, in the upcoming play "Peter/Wendy", which will run from Nov. 19 -21.

Anelga Hajjar
Nikki Kim
Staff Writers

Since its Disney debut in 1953, "Peter Pan" has become a well-known and popular story, beloved by all ages. On Nov. 19-21, Lexington High School will launch its own version of the classic for the annual fall play.

Having conquered Shakespeare and workshop writing in the past, the drama department is now performing a more familiar and relatable story this year.

This version goes all the way back to 1904, when J.M. Barrie wrote the original version, "The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up." An adaptation of Barrie's story, the play, called "Peter/Wendy," explores traditional characters like Peter Pan in greater depth.

Katrina Chaput, an LHS senior who will play Peter, said, "No matter what, he is a fun character to play. His catchphrase is 'I want always to be a little boy.' He's always moving and the scenes are so much fun."

Although this is a transformation from playing the villain in last year's fall play, Chaput is prepared and eager to take on this hero's journey.

"It will be a twist on the Peter Pan that [the audience will] know. There's some great acting. There's some great battle scenes. Overall, a great and unique piece," said Jillian Singer-Wong, the head of the LHS drama department.

While this classic adaptation poses a challenge with its old language, the actors seem to enjoy the play, Singer-Wong said.

"It'll make you think. It's new, it's fresh," Chaput said.

MEET THE CAST

"I'm most excited for the part where I'm actually going to cut my hand off before opening night—it's part of my method ... They're going to sew it back on after the final show, but I'm pretty excited."
- Mat Benson, Captain Hook

"I'm excited for people to see the "look" of the show, because it's really cool. It's going to be black; we write on the set with chalk."
- Karina Wen, Wendy

"I'm most proud of the group as a whole. ... [T]here are parts where the pirate boat comes out and everyone's swaying together and if it was only one person doing it, no way it would've looked as cool."
- Katrina Chaput, Peter Pan

Staff photos by Chao Zheng Li

For more cast photos and interviews, check out lexmusket.com!

Flex Block to replace X-Block; committees plan potential activities and logistics

William Zen
Shayari Peiris
Staff Writers

As a partial replacement for X-Block, Lexington High School administration and faculty plan to introduce Flex Block, a block without a standard class that requires attendance.

Flex Block is part of a plan to revive X-Block and will be used to get extra help from teachers and for enrichment activities, said Robert Collins, the Social Studies Department Head and a member of the enrichment planning committee that created Flex Block.

Flex Block will be built into every student's schedule, most likely in the middle of the school day. There will be one Flex Block per week. Unlike X-Block, which was created to provide time for the Student-Faculty Senate, Flex Block will be mandatory for all students.

Collins said that Flex Block could be a time when "kids could get extra help... or [when] they could do activities of some sort".

There are several proposed activities for Flex Block. There may be a survey for the students to gauge activities of interest. Alternatively, Flex Block could allow time for guest speaker presentations, said William Cole, an economics, marketing, and business teacher at LHS.

Cole also recognizes a disadvantage. It would be difficult to make the activities meaningful without requiring the commitment and preparation of a class, said Cole.

There are currently two committees planning Flex Block. One committee is planning enrichment activities while the other is working on logistics, technical issues and concerns with student-teacher help.

Laura Lasa, principal of LHS, said in an email that "the groups are exploring formats used at other schools. They are also identifying the pros and cons of a future X-Block and software that will assist with scheduling." A new computer program other than Aspen X2 may be required, and further, the block schedule would be revised, she said.

As for the students without commitments, Flex Block will be treated like a free except students will not be allowed to leave school. However, the details are not fully determined, said Collins.

Since X-Block was removed, "people in the school, [the] leadership team, the principal, Laura Lasa, especially, have been thinking about how we can [have] X-Block in a way that meets state requirements and provides extra...help for kids who need some help," while mandating attendance and providing activities to other students, said Collins.

Editorial

School privacy policy worth a read

The American Civil Liberties Union recently filed 37 public record requests regarding student privacy and suspected privacy rights violations in 35 school districts.

While 29 districts provided their records, Lexington was among the towns that asked for money in exchange for the time it took to procure the requested documents. Their price? $2,200 to access the documents "that should be publicly posted on district websites," said Kade Crockford, Director of the Technology for Liberty Program at the ACLU of Massachusetts.

However, according to Lexington Public School's District Director of Technology, Tom Plati, the ACLU asked for "every memo, memorandum, invoice, email, and every piece of paper related to our one-to-one programs, and our privacy policy." The "one-to-one" programs include the iPad program offered to various LHS and LPS students.

"We calculated the sum based on the number of hours it would take to access these documents and redact names," Plati said, "The name redaction itself is to protect student privacy. It's required by law." According to Plati, the privacy policy was already available online.

Young people across the nation have been the driving force behind many campaigns to protect privacy. Although privacy is a seemingly important value for high-schoolers, few students have read the privacy policy in the student handbook. For many students, a signature on a form received in the beginning of the year is the only time the student-parent handbook or the privacy policy comes into play at all.

According to the student handbook, "users shouldn't expect privacy when using an LPS computing system", and "LPS retains the right to inspect, monitor and log any and all aspects of computing systems used by anyone."

While the privacy policy itself does not rule out the possibility of arbitrary searches of students' personal accounts while using LHS technology, "[Lexington] doesn't search through search histories unless they have a probable cause, like if there is a harm to the student or to others" Tom Plati said.

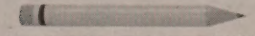
Although Lexington has been criticized by the ACLU, the ACLU does make a valid point about the need to further protect students' privacy.

Lexington Public Schools needs to adapt its privacy policy to account for new technologies. Changes should include the addition of amendments specifying that LPS won't look into search histories without probable cause.

Above all, LHS students should read the privacy policy to fully understand their rights. After all, knowing your rights is half the battle.

Unsigned editorials reflect the opinion of the majority of the editorial board.

collegebored



■ **Becca Xu**
Columnist

Who wants to go to college?

"Who wants to go to college?" sounds remarkably similar to the title of a game show where instead of winning a million bucks, contestants win that coveted admissions letter that reads: "Yes, we think you are good enough to go to [insert name here] college."

Let me keep going with this analogy. Instead of answering quiz questions on a variety of topics, you have to check off boxes. "Is my GPA high enough?" "Are my SAT scores passable?" "Am I the president of this club and the captain of this sport?" "Do I volunteer at a pediatric cancer ward in my spare time because I am a good person and have a desire to save the whole world one day and this is why I NEED to go to your school?" And with each box you check off, the higher and higher your chances are for that million-dollar "YES".

Of course, you also have your lifelines. For the "50:50 choice," if you are a student athlete, congratulations you may be recruited! Instead of "phoning a friend," if your parents went to this school then congratulations you are a legacy! And for the "ask the audience choice," if you have the ability to hire an army of tutors and counselors, then congratulations to you as well!

This is not "Who Wants to be a Millionaire," and not everybody gets all of these lifelines. Actually, there are millions of people who got a grand total of none of these lifelines, but somehow they have made their way to college—and you will too.

Like a game show, the stakes are high, your future is all in your hands and you are probably sweating more than a sinner in church because let's face it: THIS IS STRESSFUL.

Maybe thinking of this whole college thing in terms of a game show puts things into perspective a bit more. You win some and you lose some. Sometimes it's rigged and the outcomes are unfair, sometimes you will have an emotional breakdown on national television (or in the privacy of your bedroom) and sometimes, after all of your hard work and tough decisions, you win that million.

LEF Trivia Bee takes place Nov. 10

Staff photo by Ryan Leung

"The Trivia Bee is a great opportunity to bring the Lexington community together. It is a great cause to volunteer for," freshman Devanshi Bhangle said. ***Check out lexmusket.com for the full article!***

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2015–2016

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Multi-stall all-gender bathrooms now at Lexington High School

Caitlin Deschner
Eunice Kim
Staff Writers

Some multi-stall single-gender bathrooms have been converted to all-gender bathrooms in three of four buildings at Lexington High School this fall.

Single-stall all-gender restrooms will also continue to be available to those who prefer to use them, Laura Lasa, LHS principal, said.

In 2011, Massachusetts authorized An Act Relative to Gender Identity, which prohibits discrimination based on gender identity.

This act states that all students have the right to use a bathroom for the gender with which they identify, and requires public schools to designate bathrooms that can be used by all genders.

LHS is one of the first schools to establish multi-stall all-gender bathrooms.

"I have not worked at a school previously that had tackled the issue of making restrooms safe and accessible for all students in the way Lexington High School is now doing," said Matthew Willis, a guidance counselor and GSA adviser at LHS.

Last year, the Gender and Sexuality Alliance approached Lasa about An Act Relative to Gender Identity. As a result, one-stall staff bathrooms in every building were converted to all-gender bathrooms, Lasa said.

This year, Lasa took this process one step further by converting multi-stall bathrooms to all-gender bathrooms.

"I think it's a much more humane and open approach without having it seem really different that a student is using something different," Lasa said.

The change was motivated in part by the exclusionary factors of the single-stall restrooms. The fact that the doors required keys posed multiple problems, Lasa said. The process was time-consuming for students to have to go to the dean's office to obtain the key and it created the risk of students being able to lock themselves in without faculty knowing about it.

The multi-stall restrooms simplify this issue for both faculty and students and have the benefit of not singling people out due to their preference of all-gender bathrooms.

"It doesn't become about certain kids," Lasa said.

The all-gender restrooms are located on the second floors of the Foreign Language and Math Buildings, and between the Commons in the Main Building.

However, there is still at least one all-women's and all-men's bathroom in each building as well.

Students are having mixed reactions to the new development. The school atmosphere is generally accepting of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities, and most perceive this as a positive step forward.

Junior Hasan Syed has never experienced multi-stall all-gender bathrooms anywhere else before.

"I was pleasantly surprised," Syed said. "I feel like this is a school where it's okay to be who I am without any judgment."

While most students recognize the importance of having all-gender bathrooms, many are hesitant about using them.

Sophomore Bree Hill said, "I think it is a big change that people have to adjust to, and I think it is a good thing that people are treated equally, but at the same time, it is kind of awkward having it in the high school."

It may take some time for LHS to adjust to this change, but the GSA and faculty are expecting to see gradual, positive results.

"I have great faith in the student body," Lasa said.

This change is indicative of a more accepting and inclusive LHS.

"I'm seeing this as a really positive step forward for our school community as a whole," Willis said.

One of the all-gender restrooms is located between Commons I and Commons II. Other all-gender restrooms can be found in the Math and Foreign Language buildings.

Staff photo by Andrea Michelson

Mathew Miskreet: LHS senior pursues a career in rap music

Allen Cui
Dabin Kang
Staff Writers

Mathew Varghese, known by his stage name Miskreet, is a senior at LHS as well as an aspiring rapper who has successfully found a creative outlet for his musical talents.

Miskreet first realized his potential as a songwriter and rapper before moving to Lexington from Maryland. Listening to other kids around him rap, he realized that he was capable of taking his hobby to the next level and began his career as a young musician from there.

"I saw [other kids] doing it and I was thinking 'I could do this way better,'" Miskreet said, "and I was always into music growing up. I would always used to sing since I can remember. Rapping and writing lyrics came to me naturally."

Miskreet finds inspiration in other individuals who aspire to achieve their passions. Moreover, he says the inspirations for his songs come from everyday situations that everyone can relate to in their own ways, such as love, loss and life.

"What I like about his music is how different it is," LHS senior Leo Yu, a friend of Miskreet, said. "It manages to stay both mainstream and underground at the same time. What sets it apart is the variety, from smooth laidback R&B tracks to catchy club and party bangers to meaningful, message-filled, politically-oriented pieces. There is a variety of different sounds, feels and lyrics."

Although his choice of career is supported by his friends and fans alike, Miskreet has also faced obstacles and prejudice because of his decision.

"People who don't know me will be like 'Oh, he's Indian? He's making this kind of music?' without even listening to my music," Miskreet said.

However, even critics are not enough to stop his pursuit. Miskreet said, "Once they hear [my music], they get blown back because first off, I'm not trash, and second, it's quality music."

Miskreet said that even though his parents may be supportive of his work in music, he is aware that it may not have been their first choice for his future. He continues to make music regardless of outside influences.

"Kids here study and work hard to go to college, and I just keep adding to my music. That's all I want in my life," he said.

On a day-to-day basis, Miskreet puts his thoughts and ideas on paper. His dedication continuously inspires those close to him.

"Being his good friend, I've seen the process behind his work," Yu said. "[I've seen] how he gets bursts of inspiration and sometimes stays up until two or three in the morning with creative energy. He writes, revises, practices and records it countless times in the studio to get it 'perfect'."

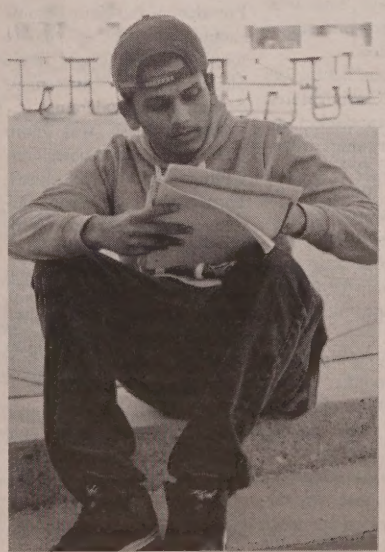
At this stage in his career, Miskreet himself has high goals and hopes for the future.

"At the age of 17, I've done so many things that 30-year-olds aren't even doing," said Miskreet. "I've got a clothing sponsorship, I've been in four magazines, I've been in mad shows, opened up for Mobb Deep, played at the Seaport World Trade Center, played in Davis Square Theater, and I'm about to open up for Slim Jesus at the Villa Victoria on Halloween."

Miskreet said that his performance at the Mobb Deep concert was the experience of a lifetime. He did not get a chance to stay for the actual concert, but he found it to be "a great night filled with good vibes and even better music."

LHS senior Kwan Yoon said, "[Miskreet] is always working on something new, trying to get his name out there ... I respect that a lot and I think he'll get far."

Currently, Miskreet is working on two different songs. One is a song for his clothing sponsor OSOS featuring Sayku (junior Josiah White). The other is called QOQ (Quality Over Quantity), which he will begin with his younger brother as soon as they raise the funds needed to produce and record the song.



Mathew Varghese, also known as Miskreet, puts his thoughts and ideas on paper on a daily basis. "Rapping and writing lyrics came to me naturally," Miskreet said.

Staff photo by Alex Lerner and Sarah Bernstein

Point of View: Green vs. Bronze Parker Statue

Students debate whether the Lexington Parker Statue should be green or bronze.

Yes, bronze is the new black!

■ Avery Gehring
Staff Writers

Lexington celebrates its rich history through a multitude of parades and monuments. These are often successful in their goal of commemorating our past. However, bronzing the Parker Statue will further improve Lexington's historical atmosphere.

According to historical documents, Henry Kitson, the original sculptor, intended the Parker Statue to be bronze. Over the years, a natural layer of patina formed, creating the a green color. This familiarity has become attractive to some Lexington residents.

"It would be weird seeing [the statue] a different color than it is now," sophomore Annalise Thomas said.

All changes are a little strange and uncomfortable at first. The transition to high school, for example, is initially awkward for some. Yet, high school is a positive experience for many and allows for students to grow and become better people.

The town of Lexington has also changed a lot in the past few years, mostly for the better. We have grown in population and our demographics continually shift. Even our town center has changed significantly with the opening and closing of multiple stores. A bronze statue would reflect these changes in Lexington as well as maintain the rich history of the town.

Bronzing is a practice that our neighboring towns have chosen as well. Concord, another town with roots in the Revolutionary War, has rebronzed its own minuteman statue.

Bronzing the Parker Statue will symbolize the improvements this town has experienced and would highlight the important events in Lexington history. Although it would be strange at first, this change will improve the overall atmosphere of the Battle Green.

No— we like the familiar green

■ Alexa Christ
Staff Writers

The recent debate about the bronzing of the Parker Statue in the Lexington town center has created controversy over the future of the appearance of the Battle Green.

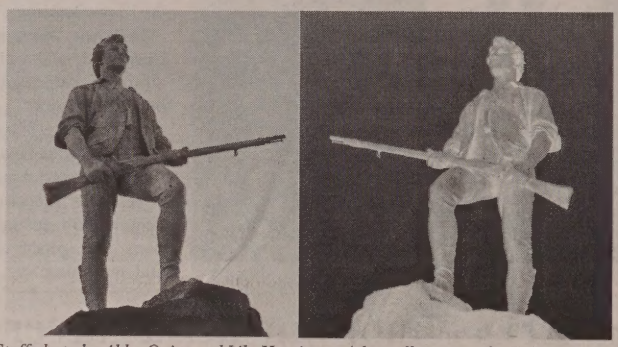
The Parker Statue, erected in 1900, was initially bronze. Over time, it has turned a rustic green that adds to both the aesthetic and the complex history of the Lexington Green.

Though the sculptor Henry Kitson's intent was originally for the statue to be bronze, he also wanted the Parker Statue to turn a natural green. Documents at the Cary Memorial Library proved his desire for the statue to turn the green it is today.

The color of the statue is also important to the people living in Lexington. The Parker Statue has been green for more than a century. For all of the residents in Lexington, it has been green for their entire lives and has become a comforting and familiar sight. Returning the statue to its original bronze would erase a century's worth of history.

Although making the Parker Statue bronze may give it a "cleaner" look, it could cause harm to the statue. Removing the patina, which gives the statue its green look, could actually cause the statue to corrode more quickly, according to "Removing Patina Could Cause Harm to Memorials", an article in the Lexington Minuteman. The patina was put there to protect the original bronze statue, and removing it would expose the statue to natural erosion.

The green of the Parker Statue is not only part of Lexington's charm but has also become a part of its history. Generations upon generations of people have lived alongside the green Parker Statue, and while restoring it to bronze might make for a new change, the green is what resonates in the mind and memories of Lexington residents.



Staff photo by Abby Quint and Lily Harrington/photo illustration by Valerie Hsieh
The Parker Statue, created in 1900, is located on the Lexington Battlegreen in the town center.

Recent political debates ignite national conversation

■ Stefan Kussmaul
Matt Weiss
Staff Writers

In an election cycle that has pitted popular outsider candidates against embattled establishment politicians, the political debates held in the past few months have been vital for understanding the state of American politics.

The most recent debate was hosted by CNBC and featured 10 Republican candidates, including front-runners Donald Trump and Ben Carson. Although the previous two debates had been fractious, with candidates interrupting, attacking and belittling each other on a whim, the CNBC debate was simply out of control.

Almost every candidate, at one point or another, openly denounced the moderators, claiming they were asking unfair "gotcha" questions.

"The questions asked in this debate illustrate why the American people don't trust the media," candidate Ted Cruz said, to huge applause. He said the debate felt like a "cage match" and did not focus on substantive issues.

The questions asked at the debate, however, were not any harder or more derisive than questions asked at the CNN Democratic debate, which took place earlier in October.

"People who want to be President of the United States should be able to answer tough questions," said Brian Steel, CNBC's spokesman, defending the moderators.

The backlash was more likely due to candidates' unwillingness to be challenged. Throughout the debate, numerous false statements were made by candidates, such as a statement by Carly Fiorina that 92 percent of job losses during Obama's first term belonged to women, a claim CNBC fact checkers found to be misleading.

The CNBC debate, like the two others before it, also showed the increasingly conservative stance of the Republican Party, with candidates taking uncompromising stances on highly divisive topics such as abortion and illegal immigration.

"We're the only ones dumb enough, stupid enough, to have [birthright citizenship]," Trump said at the CNN debate, referring to the guarantee in the 14th Amendment that anyone born in the United States is automatically granted U.S. citizenship. Trump also proposed building a wall to prevent Mexicans from crossing the U.S. border and deporting the estimated 11 million illegal immigrants living in the U.S. today.

Although Republicans have long been against illegal immigration, the new extremism of their positions shows a party that is drifting increasingly to the right.

On the opposite end of the political spectrum, the Democrats have only had one debate. Only six sanctioned debates have been scheduled by the Democratic National Committee, the organization which recently instituted harsh penalties for candidates who participate in debates not organized by the DNC.

That means Democratic voters will be far less informed than they were in 2008, when candidates participated in 26 debates.

The move by Debbie Wasserman Schultz, head of the DNC and former Hillary Clinton campaign staffer, has been widely criticized as a way of suppressing Clinton's chief rival, Bernie Sanders, a progressive Vermont senator who is far less well-known than Clinton.

The October democratic debate focused on the divide between the two candidates. Many democrats have become disillusioned with Clinton, who is known to change positions on key issues and is supported by big banks and corporations. They see Sanders, who has championed the same issues over his entire political career and refuses big money donations, as a passionate leader who can effect real change.

Clinton, however, had a strong performance in the debate, firmly portraying herself as an effective leader, dispelling apprehension about her ability as a politician and even casting doubt on Sanders' stance on gun control, a heated topic for Democrats.

As a result, Clinton was largely lauded as the winner by CNN and other large media outlets. However, online polls taken by CNN (which were later, in an extremely controversial move, deleted by the news station) showed overwhelming support for Sanders as the winner. It should be noted that CNN is owned by Time Warner, which according to the Center for Responsive Politics is one of Clinton's top ten biggest donors.

Nevertheless it is difficult to say if there was a clear winner in the debate. Although Clinton was able to re-establish herself as a capable politician, Sanders gained valuable media attention. With the primaries not starting for another three months, it is unclear whether the debate will have an impact on the race.

As for future debates, if there's one thing we know for sure, it's this: we'll be watching.

Lexington students take part in triennial exam for international rankings

■ Sukanya Walhekar
Staff Writer

On Thursday Oct. 8, Lexington High School administered the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) to about 38 randomly selected sophomores and juniors between the age of 15 years three months and 16 years two months.

The computerized test took place in the Library Media Center. Participating students were excused from the first three blocks of the day to take it. Two hundred forty schools in the nation took part in the test, which is comprised of multiple choice and open response questions, as part of a triennial global study that ranks countries based on test performance.

Students were randomly selected by the federal government to take the PISA test to ensure an even distribution among race and gender, but selected students could opt out of the test if they wished.

"I thought it was interesting that I was chosen and could get four hours of community service and be paid $25 to take it, so I thought why not?" John Guo, junior, said.

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development website, students are chosen at age 15 because "at this age, students in OECD countries are nearing the end of compulsory education."

More than 70 countries took part this year, and the test in 2015 focused on science. The test focus changes each time it is administered; the focus in 2012 was math.

"It was on the same difficulty level as MCAS, but completely different format," Guo said.

"It's pretty neat that LHS students could take something that puts them on an international scale, and that they contributed to worldwide rankings," Associate Principal John Murray said.

Murray also recognizes the test's flaws.

"It's an interesting tool to get a snapshot of where students are at one time but can't be used as concrete evidence for educational standards," he said.

For the past 15 years, it has been used as exactly that: an indicator of the level of education standards.

Former Lexington Public Schools Superintendent Paul Ash discussed the test in a statement last April.

Ash wrote that "while it is true that standardized tests provide school districts with some valuable information… as Albert Einstein said 'not all that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted.'"

Ash also wrote, "the data [does] not tell us why one nation scored higher or lower than another."

This addresses the scores the U.S. achieves triennially on this test: in 2012, it was 36th in mathematics, 28th in science and 24th in ELA.

However, different regions of a single country may compete separately. If the U.S. were to do this, Bay Staters would have a glimmer of hope: Massachusetts ranks top in the country, ninth in the world for math and fourth for reading.

In my Colony...

A tale of a new and improved LHS

■ Rebecca Kielar
Columnist

When I first heard that I was appointed a colonist for the Lexington Musket, I was simply thrilled. What does a colonist for The Musket do, you may ask. Well, as a colonist, I can colonize new territory, turn it into an extension of our lively, thriving town and even build a new school to educate the kids who live in it. Lexington is a town that is known for its colonists, and I am determined to become one of the greats.

In my new school, I will take note of some of the areas to improve at Lexington High School. The cafeteria appears to be a great place to start. In my colony, I could cut the lunch lines in half at the cafeteria by hiring extra staff and opening up more lines. I could also install enough tables and chairs in the cafeteria so that everyone can have a place to sit at lunchtime without having to sit outside in harsh weather conditions.

I could build an auditorium with acoustics that allow one to hear the contrast and dynamics in music. Being a violinist myself, I know that music is not simply pitches and rhythms, but also emotion, texture and volume. In my colony, the stage would allow for music to be brought to its fullest potential.

That odd, grimy smell in the field house would be gone at my school.

I could even help the faculty understand that iPads are not necessary for student growth and are an unnecessary expenditure. It seems as though SMART boards are actually kind of stupid. Just this past week, I witnessed my science teacher calibrating and recalibrating the SMART board at least four times. Not only is this annoying, it also wastes class time when students could be absorbing new material.

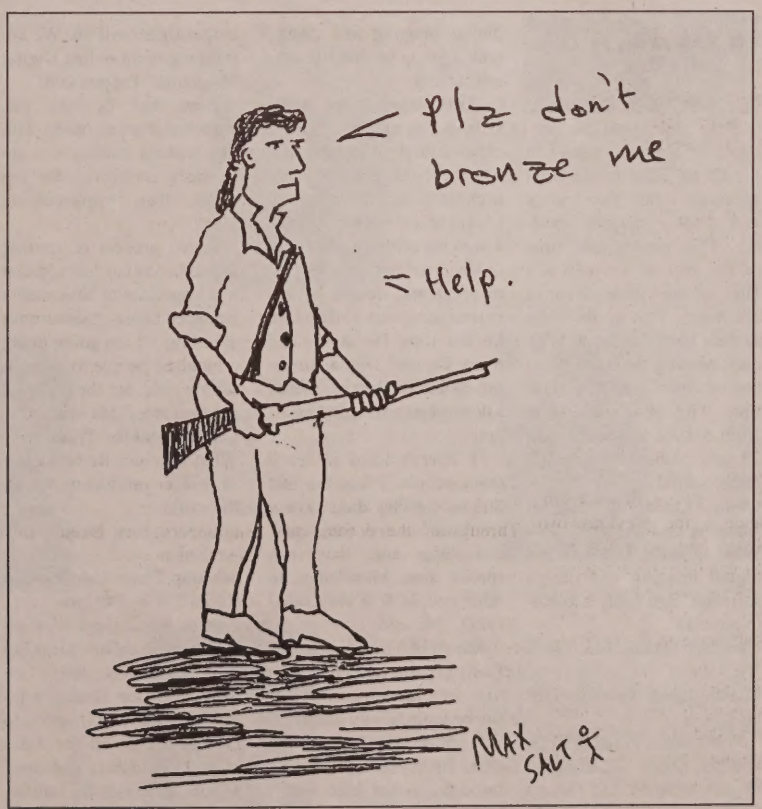
I could get the teachers in my new school to hold meetings so that they do not schedule five tests on the same day. This would allow students to not only have enough time to prepare for exams, but to also not be overly stressed on test days.

And, in my colony, when music is played in the hallway between classes, which should be an enjoyable addition to the school-day, we would actually hear the music instead of the fuzzy crackle of static.

Imagine a high school in which the kids know how to create an inclusive environment. For instance, when students pass by other students in the hallway, they acknowledge each other instead of pretending they did not notice each other. Maybe if this were to happen we would not even need the music in the hallway to help de-stress.

There is this whole thing with homerooms being rewarded a donut party for collecting the most money to end world hunger. I can't quite put my finger on it, but something is just not right there. Am I the only one who sees the irony in this?

I could even ... wait a minute ... I am a columnist, not a colonist? Oh well, I guess columnists can dream too. While there are many students, including myself, who are proud to attend LHS for its academic, athletic and artistic achievements, there is always room to improve. Maybe one day we could recolonize LHS and address some of these ideas at the high school.



Comic by Max Saltman

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- Heike Arendt

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LHS orchestras, choirs and bands perform in fall concerts

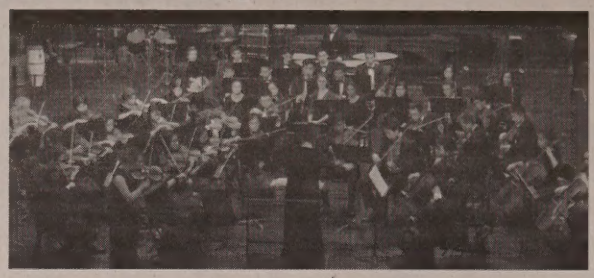
■ Alexandria Snyders Dykeman
Azalea Yunus
Staff Writers

Chamber Orchestra performs Mendelssohn's "Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 64" on Nov. 5 in the Auditorium

Photo courtesy of Aykut Bilge

Fall String Celebration, LHS Auditorium, Oct. 22 at 7:30 p.m.

At the Fall String Celebration, all three orchestras at Lexington High School (Repertoire, Symphony and Chamber) performed their first concert of the 2015-2016 school year. The music across the three ensembles varied greatly.

Repertoire Orchestra, the entry level group conducted by both Janet Haas and Rachel Jayson, performed Mystère by Shirl Jae Atwell, Lady Gaga Fugue by Stefani Germanotta and Nadir Khayat and Tarantelle by Almon C.

"I was expecting it to go not as well because it was the first orchestra concert of the year and we could've used some more preparation, but I think it actually went pretty good! My favorite piece was Tarantelle because it is more fun to play," Kara Xie, a sophomore violinist in Repertoire Orchestra, said.

Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Jayson, performed Movement I of Prelude of An English Suite by C.H. Parry, Mare Tranquillitatis by Roger Zare and Movement I of Vivace of Four Tango Postcards by Benedikt Brydern.

Sophomore Lily Crandall-Oral, a violist in Symphony Orchestra, described how the size of an ensemble affects the playing experience. She said that she enjoys playing in a smaller orchestra rather than a larger one.

Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Haas, performed The Red Pony by Aaron Copland arranged by Morales as well as Movements II and III, called Calm and Mischievous, of Four Appalachian Moods by David Williams.

Sophomore Andrew Li, a violinist in Chamber Orchestra, said his favorite piece to play for this concert was the second movement of Williams's Four Appalachian Moods.

"Since it's all pizzicato [plucking the strings to create music], and is also conductorless, it requires a lot of attention and it also requires leadership," Li said.

Honors Choirs - Old South Church, Nov. 4 at 7:30 p.m.

Lexington High School's Honors Choirs performed for the first time this year at Old South Church in Boston on Nov. 4.

Women's Chorus performed Plant A Tree by Michael Bojesen, Arise My Love by Jason Iannuzzi, Awake, O North Wind by Jason Iannuzzi and Minä olen Härmän Kankaanpaastä- a Finnish Folk Song, arranged Matti Hyökki.

Concert Choir performed Jubilate Deo by Giovanni Gabrieli, Ngana by Stephen Leek, Svete Tihiy by Alexandre Gretchaninoff and Great Day, an African-American Spiritual, arr. Warren Martin.

Madrigal Singers performed a set of 20th century French songs including My Flight for Heaven by Blake Hensen, Open Thou Mine Eyes by John Rutter and Dashing Away the Smoothing Iron- an English folk song arranged by Rutter. All three ensembles performed different Ave Maria settings.

Concert Band - Fall Instrumental Concert, Auditorium, Nov. 5

LHS' Concert Band had its first performance of the year at the Fall Instrumental Concert, which took place on Nov. 5 in the LHS auditorium.

"Concerts are usually very good representations of habits developed during the rehearsal process ... To sound good in a concert, you have to be in the habit of sounding good in rehearsals," Justin Aramati, the director of the group said.

This year, Concert Band played three songs instead of the usual two.

"I'm looking forward to showcasing the progress the Concert Band has made in these first two months of school," Aramati said.

Aramati's favorite piece in this concert rotation is called Danzon. Although it was originally part of "Fancy Free," a ballet, it has been transcribed for band.

"Danzon is the musical accompaniment to [a] third sailor's dance. It's playful and fun, and we really enjoy playing it!" Aramati said.

Aramati described Concert Band's preparation steps, which included looking back over the details and completing run-throughs. He said, "It's easy to forget the big picture when rehearsing smaller items, but we must be used to playing our pieces beginning to end if we want the concert to go well."

Digital imaging and ecological fundraising among many new clubs

■ Asiya Karim
Staff Writers

Only once a year can hundreds of students gather in the Quad, blast music from speakers, offer free candy and display colorful posters. This magnificent time of the year is the activities fair, where underclassmen are free to sign up for clubs to their hearts' content. With each passing year, the number of clubs seems to multiply. This year, Lexington High School has more than 20 new clubs and over 135 clubs in total.

Club: Lexington Digital Imaging and Design Club

What they do: Learn to use digital imaging and design software, then apply it to other projects

Founders: Frank Ma, Coco Xie

Meeting time: Thursdays after school

Frank Ma, a junior at LHS, is a cofounder of Lexington Digital Imaging and Design Club, a new club at LHS. He created this club to share his knowledge and passion for digital imaging and design with a group of about 18 other students.

"Look around the world around you and you see all these digital imaging products … I think it is a very important skill to have and I want to spread it to people across the school," Ma said.

Ma first got into digital imaging and design by experimenting with software in his free time. He later joined Mary Pappas' Digital Imaging class, and Pappas offered Ma a role as a teaching assistant.

"I always liked to teach other people. I like the fact that before they didn't know anything but now they know something and they can spread that knowledge to other people. It is very satisfying," Ma said.

Ma and his cofounder Coco Xie approached Pappas with their idea and asked that she be their faculty adviser.

"I liked the idea of the club, but it was not thought through, so the club members and I are working on what we would like the club to become and what, if any, output there will be. We are thinking of an online Digital Magazine," Pappas said.

Now that the club has launched, Pappas works with the student leaders on developing objectives for the clubs, then implementing them.

In the process of starting the club, Ma has learned that it is important to have realistic expectations. "Sometimes you think, 'I am going to get a hundred people to sign up for my club', but the reality is not the same," Ma said.

Club: Stand for Trees

What they do: Raise money to protect rainforests across the world

Founders: Lien Huang, Lily Arslanian

Meeting Time: Thursdays in Room 239 at 2:40 p.m.

After watching a view-altering video called "Dear Future Generations: Sorry" on YouTube, Lien Huang, a junior at LHS, was inspired to created the Stand for Trees club. This club is dedicated to raising money for rainforests across the world.

The club is an extension of an existing organization, in which people donate money to combat deforestation. Huang reached out to the people at Stand for Trees with her idea of organizing bake sales and other local events to raise money for the club.

Photo courtesy of Lien Huang and Lily Arslanian
Huang and Arslanian advertise their club at the activities fair.

"Over the course of this year we hope to support many different kinds of rainforests that the organization has to offer! Also, my cofounder [Lily Arslanian] had this amazing idea to possibly send in care packages and letters to the communities we have supported and protected when donating to a forest," Huang said.

The club currently has between 10 and 15 members.

Huang and Arslanian selected Julie Kuo as their faculty adviser.

"She's a wonderful person and we are extremely happy to have such [a] passionate club adviser," Huang said.

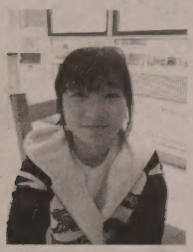
Huang cautions other club starters, "It was kind of a stressful experience because not only do you have to find a club adviser who you connect with but you go through this process of hoping your club becomes an established one that influences LHS in the best way possible. It takes time and you shouldn't rush into a club idea if you aren't completely 100 percent into it."

For clubs, check out lexmusket.com!

What is worse than music playing during passing time on Friday?

— photos and quotes compiled by Shinji Rho, Valerie Hsieh and Mandy Quan

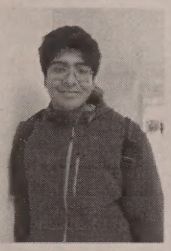
Though many may complain about the quality and choice of music played during passing time on Fridays, there are things that are certainly worse. Lexington High School students and faculty share their opinions.



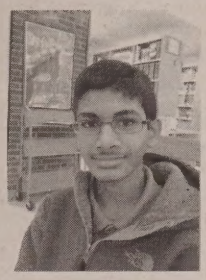
I don't feel annoyed by it. I feel like it makes me relaxed. I don't know. I'm just confused why everyone hates it. The purpose of the music is to make people feel less stressed out.
— Lina Zhang, senior

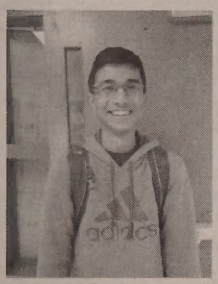
College applications are definitely worse. Especially when you miss your transcript request deadline.
— Divya Jain, senior

Hallway music makes me want to bring my iPod to school every day and plug my ears.
— Vishnu Pydah, senior



Procrastinating, writing the essay until like the last day before it's due. Also, accidentally kicking the wall with your toe.
— Karannath Ragunath, sophomore



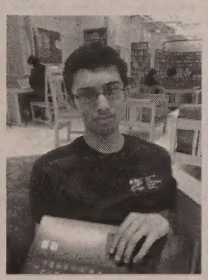


Mustard is worse.
— Zahin Ahmed, senior

No music...I don't know. It's not that bad.
— John Siracuse, sophomore

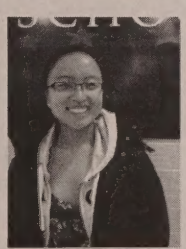
I think there can be a lot of things... Like low GPA for instance. Eating ginger is also worse.
— Elaine Lu, junior

Not much is worse... especially when the music plays during a physics test.
— Roshan Padaki, senior



[The music is] okay... Just get better speakers. What's worse? ... 9 p.m. deadlines.
— Anna Ren, senior

Nothing is better than hallway music! I absolutely love it.
— Kathy Pike, librarian



Oh god, it's so awful. I was in the debate room in the mods, and the sound quality there is just really really horrible. What's worse? I don't know: teachers dancing?
— Cynthia Chen, sophomore

Leah Strohmeyer: Basketball - 'I would love to see the team go farther this season'

Staff photo by Attiya Nurse

LHS junior Leah Strohmeyer started playing basketball in elementary school. Her father played basketball in college, and has "always just loved the sport", she said.

Strohmeyer has found some "amazing aspects" to the sport, "from the hard work to the necessary competitive edge," while her favorite part of playing basketball is "the strong team atmosphere."

As for the school team, Strohmeyer said it was "a hard-working, tight knit bunch." "Everyone is so selfless and puts the team above themselves, which is tough to find," she said.

Strohmeyer would "love to see [the team] go farther this season," as they did not make it past the first round of the state tournament last year.

Louisa Bachman: Ski Racing - 'I try be a leader and help [new racers]'

LHS junior Louisa Bachman is a member of the Lexington and Waltham ski racing team, which is entering its second year in existence.

Bachman started skiing with her parents when she was three years old and first started racing with the Pico Ski Club in Killington, Vermont. Since then, she has been racing for 7 years.

The ski team is a joint effort between Lexington and Waltham high school students. "I was not part of creating the team, but I was ecstatic when I heard I was going to have a chance to be on a high school race team," said Bachman.

Bachman hopes to qualify for the State Championships again and to "become a better racer and skier".

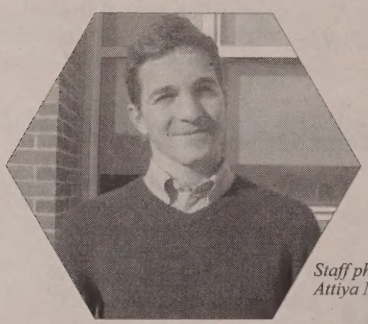
"Last year, the team was a really great group of kids who wouldn't have had the opportunity to be friends without the team," said Bachman.

"As someone who has raced before, I try to be a leader and help others who haven't [raced before]," she said.

She would like to see the team grow with the addition of new members this upcoming season. "Ski racing is a no-cut sport and anyone who can ski is welcome to join the team!" said Bachman.

Staff photo by Attiya Nurse

Stephen Willis: Wrestling - '[The] Doughboys team is a family'



Staff photo by Attiya Nurse

Stephen Willis is a junior at LHS. Willis started wrestling in 7th grade, when living in California. Willis' passion for wrestling comes from his dad, who wrestled throughout high school and college and was undefeated his high school junior year.

Apart from wrestling with the school, Willis trains at Doughboy Wrestling Club in Lowell with classmates Jonathan Stix and Andres Benites. Willis said that the "Doughboys team is a family."

As for the school team, Willis said that the team is "disbanded" this year, having lost eight seniors, and recruiting more committed members has been harder. Confident on what he wants for the future, Willis says he wants to wrestle in "Division 1...with Harvard or Cornell."

— profiles compiled by Maria Santillana Linares and Niha Putta

ULTIMATE FRISBEE GAINS POPULARITY AT HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

A Brief History of Ultimate at Lexington High School

1999 - first team founded

2000 - first state tournament

2005 - first female captain

2012 - officially made varsity program at LHS

2012 - made state finals

2015 - made Northeasterns, won state finals

— compiled by Valerie Hsieh

■ **Dennis Kwon**
Staff Writer

If you ever find yourself outside Room 232 after school, you will not be able to miss the glass display out in front of it. This case is always filled with trophies and a small hanging whiteboard scrawled with the words "Meet at Lincoln @ 3" line the interior.

Unlike the dozens of silent classrooms, this one is filled with the student-athletes of the Lexington High School Ultimate Frisbee team. Coached by social studies teacher Larry David, the Ultimate team has been competing for 16 years in everything from friendly scrimmages to regional and state level competitions. Last May, the Ultimate team won the Massachusetts state tournament.

David attributes the LHS Ultimate team's successes to a core of skillful players who "work very hard at teaching the newer players and genuinely seem to like each other."

A typical Ultimate practice, like that of any other LHS sport, consists of stretching, jogging and rigorous drills.

LHS senior and Ultimate team member Solomon Wang pointed out the emphasis on teamwork and community in the sport, saying that "one person can't win the game."

In an Ultimate game, players pass the "disc" (Frisbee) from teammate to teammate until the disc is caught in the end zone, similar to a touchdown in football. There is no referee in Ultimate games. Instead, the players make their own calls in accordance with the "spirit of the game," which builds trust between opposing teams.

According to the World Flying Disc Corporation website, the first game of Ultimate was played at a New Jersey high school in the early 1970s. Since then, the game has spread to other high schools and communities across the country and the world. Yet it has long struggled to establish itself as a competitive, very real sport in a world full of others that have been around for centuries.

Recently, competitive Ultimate Frisbee has been gaining credibility in the sports world. ESPN and other major sports networks have been airing professional Ultimate league matches. Last summer, the International Olympic Committee officially recognized the sport's international governing body, the World Flying Disc Federation.

David thanks the LHS administration and the athletic director who "saw the value in treating [Ultimate] like a legitimate sport." As for the students who still do not accept it as legitimate, David urges them to "come out to practice and be prepared to get [their] butt[s] handed to [them]."